

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-3, 5-9 and 11-14, and ADD claims 15 and 16 in accordance with the following.

1. (currently amended) A membership management system, comprising:

at least one apparatus connected via a network;

a database held by each of a plurality of service provision sites; and

a database held by an integrated membership management center, wherein when a user makes an application for a registration of membership information at one of the service provision sites by using said apparatus, the one of the service provision sites receiving the application first registers the membership information into the database held by the one of the service provision sites, and then subsequently when the user is not registered in the database held by the integrated membership management center, the membership information of the user is automatically transferred from the one of the service provision sites to the integrated membership management center and registered into the database held by the integrated membership management center, wherein the membership information comprises a user ID and a password and the integrated membership management center allows the user to use a same user ID and password throughout the service provision sites.

2. (currently amended) A membership management system, comprising:

at least one apparatus connected via a network;

a database held by each of a plurality of service provision sites; and

a database held by an integrated membership management center, wherein each service provision site comprises:

a membership registration guidance display unit requesting a user to first register membership information at the service provision site;

a guide unit guiding the user to obtain from the at least one apparatus the membership information that has been input from the apparatus based on a guidance of the membership registration guidance display unit;

a request transfer unit requesting automatically transferring to the integrated membership management center to subsequently register the membership information first registered at the service provision site;

a unit obtaining from the integrated membership management center, the information about whether the requested automatically transferred membership information has already been registered in the integrated membership management center or whether the integrated membership management center has registered the requested automatically transferred membership information as new registration; and

a post unit posting to the at least one apparatus a user ID and a password, which are authenticated by the integrated membership management center allowing the user to use the same user ID and password throughout the service provision sites.

3. (currently amended) The membership management system according to claim 2, wherein the integrated membership management center comprises:

a search unit searching for a record that coincides with user information when receiving from a service provision site a request for registering an automatic transfer of membership information;

a unit preparing the user ID and the password and adding the user ID and the password to a database when there is no record that coincides with the requested automatically transferred registration membership information as a result of the search;

an adder adding a service qualification to the user to enable the user to receive services from the service provision site when there is a record that coincides with the requested automatically transferred registration membership information as a result of the search; and

a post unit posting the user ID and the password authenticated by the integrated membership management center to the service provision site.

4. (previously presented) The membership management system according to claim 2, wherein the membership registration guidance display unit requests the user to input items of membership information for the integrated membership management center even if the input items of information are not necessary for the service provision site.

5. (currently amended) An integrated membership management center that is connected to a plurality of service provision sites and to at least one apparatus via a network, the integrated membership management center comprising:

a searching unit searching and determining whether a record exists that coincides with new membership information corresponding to an application for membership first completed by a user at one of the service provision sites to obtain access to the one of the service provision sites, from an apparatus; and

a database subsequently automatically registering the new membership information first completed by the user at one of the service provision sites when the searching unit determines that the user is not registered in the database, allowing the user to use a same user ID and password to access the service provision sites.

6. (currently amended) The integrated membership management center according to claim 5, further comprising:

a unit searching for a record that coincides with user information when receiving from a service provision site a request for an automatic transfer of registering membership information corresponding to the application completed by the user at the service provision site;

a unit preparing a user ID and a password and adding the user ID and the password to a database when there is no record that coincides with the requested automatically transferred registration membership information as a result of the search;

an adder adding a service qualification to the user to enable the user to receive services from the service provision site when there is a record that coincides with the requested automatically transferred registration membership information as a result of the search; and

a unit posting the user ID and the password to the one of the service provision sites.

7. (currently amended) A service provision site, comprising:

membership registration guidance display unit requesting a user to first register membership information at the service provision site;

a unit guiding the user to obtain from an apparatus the membership information that has been input from the apparatus based on a guidance of the membership registration guidance display unit;

a unit requesting an integrated membership management center to subsequently register automatically transferring the membership information first registered at the service provision site;

a unit obtaining from the integrated membership management center the information about whether the requested automatically transferred membership information has been registered in the integrated membership management center or whether the integrated

membership management center has registered the requested-automatically transferred membership information as new registration; and

a unit posting to the apparatus a user ID and a password authenticated by the integrated membership management center, wherein the membership registration guidance display unit requests the user to input items of membership information for the integrated membership management center even if the input items of information are not necessary for the service provision site and allows the user to use a same user ID and password used at another service provision site.

8. (currently amended) A membership management system, comprising:

an apparatus connected via a network;

a database held by each service provision sites; and

a database held by an integrated membership management center, wherein each service provision site comprises:

a membership registration guidance display requesting a user to first register membership information at the service provision site;

a guiding unit guiding the user to obtain from the apparatus the membership information that has been input from the apparatus based on a guidance of the membership registration guidance display;

~~a first unit requesting the integrated membership management center to subsequently register-automatically transferring~~ the membership information first registered at the service provision site;

a second unit obtaining from the integrated membership management center the information about whether the requested-automatically transferred membership information has already been registered in the integrated membership management center or whether the integrated membership management center has registered the requested-automatically transferred membership information as new registration; and

a posting unit posting to the apparatus a user ID and a password, which are authenticated by the integrated membership management center, wherein the membership management system allows the user to use a same user ID and password throughout the service provision sites.

9. (currently amended) The membership management system according to claim 8, wherein the integrated membership management center comprises:

a third unit searching for a record that coincides with user information when receiving from a service provision site ~~a request for registering an automatic transfer of membership information;~~

a fourth unit preparing the user ID and the password and adding the user ID and the password to a database when there is no record that coincides with the ~~requested automatically transferred registration~~ membership information as a result of the search;

a fifth unit adding a service qualification to the user to enable the user to receive services from the service provision site when there is a record that coincides with the ~~requested automatically transferred registration~~ membership information as a result of the search; and

a sixth unit posting the user ID and the password authenticated by the integrated membership management center to the service provision site.

10. (previously presented) The membership management system according to claim 8, wherein the membership registration guidance display requests the user to input items of membership information for the integrated membership management center even if the input items of information are not necessary for the service provision site.

11. (currently amended) An integrated membership management center that is connected to a plurality of service provision sites and to at least one apparatus via a network, the integrated membership management center comprising:

a search unit searching and determining whether a record exists that coincides with new membership information corresponding to an application first completed by a user at a service provision site to gain access to the service provision site, from an apparatus; and

a database ~~subsequently automatically~~ registering the new membership information when the searching unit determines that the user is not registered in the database, wherein the integrated membership management center allows the user to use a same user ID and password to access the service provision sites.

12. (currently amended) The integrated membership management center according to claim 11, further comprising:

a third unit searching for a record that coincides with user information when receiving from a service provision site ~~a request for registering an automatic transfer of membership~~ information corresponding to the application completed by the user at the service provision site;

a fourth unit preparing the user ID and the password and adding the user ID and the password to a database when there is no record that coincides with the ~~requested automatically transferred~~ registration membership information as a result of the search;

a fifth unit adding a service qualification to the user to enable the user to receive services from the service provision site when there is a record that coincides with the ~~requested automatically transferred~~ registration membership information as a result of the search; and

a sixth unit posting the user ID and the password to the service provision site.

13. (currently amended) A service provision site, comprising:

a membership registration guidance display requesting a user to first register membership information at the service provision site;

a guiding unit guiding the user to obtain from an apparatus the membership information that has been input from the apparatus based on a guidance of the membership registration guidance display;

a first unit ~~requesting automatically transferring to an integrated membership management center to subsequently register the membership information which is first registered at the service provision site;~~

a second unit obtaining from the integrated membership management center the information about whether the ~~requested automatically transferred~~ membership information has been registered in the integrated membership management center or whether the integrated membership management center has registered the ~~requested automatically transferred~~ membership information as new registration; and

a third unit posting to the apparatus a user ID and a password authenticated by the integrated membership management center, wherein the membership registration guidance display requests the user to input items of membership information for the integrated membership management center even if the input items of information are not necessary for the service provision site, allowing the user to use the same user ID and password throughout the service provision sites.

14. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising:
means for linking an integrated registration center to a plurality of service provision sites;
means for registering user information input by a user at one of the service provision sites to gain access to the one of the service provision sites first; and
means for determining whether the user information has been previously stored at the integrated registration center, wherein
when the user information is stored at the integrated registration center, the user gains access to the plurality of service provision sites, and when the user has not been previously registered at the integrated registration center, then the user information is subsequently automatically transferred to and stored at the integration registration center, to allow the other service provision sites to obtain the user information, thereby allowing the user to access the plurality of service provision sites using a same user ID and password.

15. (new) An integrated membership management registration method, comprising:
allowing a user to register at a first service provision site; and
automatically transferring registration information from the first service provision site to an integrated membership management center.

16. (new) The integrated membership management registration method as recited in claim 15, further comprising allowing a user to obtain access to a second service provision site using access information associated with the registration at the first service provision site.